

Complaints & Investigation Case Triage Process

Once a complaint has been received, it's reviewed by a Registered Nurse (RN) Investigator who will then use a triage process to determine the level of risk posed to the public. Complaints are triaged into one of four levels. Examples for each level include, but are not limited to:

Level One: CRITICAL/Imminent Threat (Red)

Need for Immediate Investigation

- Significant physical abuse involving client or family
- Sexual misconduct involving client or family
- Substance abuse
- Drug diversion/prescription fraud/unauthorized possession of control substance
- Client death or significant harm related to care or lack of care
- Failure to intervene in an emergent situation – resulting in death
- Active psychiatric or cognitive impairment

Level Two: EMERGENT: High-Risk/High-Harm (Blue)

- Sexual misconduct with patient or co-worker
- Failure to intervene in an emergent situation – resulting in significant patient harm
- Medication/treatment errors – resulting in death/significant harm to patient
- Repeated practice deficits with high risk for harm
- Not following policy/procedure – resulting in significant patient harm
- Failure to follow physician's orders – resulting death / significant harm to patient
- Criminal conduct /conviction with significant harm or injury to another
- Current or recent action in another province resulting in discipline

Level Three: URGENT/Medium-Risk/Medium Harm; potential risk to client/public, no substantial danger or imminent threat (Yellow)

- Physical /verbal abuse, boundary violations
- Failure to intervene resulting in minimal harm
- Medication/treatment errors resulting in harm
- Practicing beyond scope
- Not following policy/procedure – resulting in minimal harm to patient
- Failure to follow physician orders – resulting in minimal harm
- Abandonment of patient
- Breach of confidentiality
- Theft from a client, family, or place of employment
- Conviction of a criminal act (i.e. DUI, theft of property)

Level Four: LESS-URGENT/Low- Risk/Low Harm; little risk to client/public, no substantial danger or imminent threat (Green)

- Documentation errors
- Medication errors – no harm to client

- Inappropriate interpersonal communication
- Practicing without a license
- Sleeping on duty
- Social media

During the review process, if a complaint fails to meet the threshold of incompetence or misconduct as defined in the Sections 25 & 26 of *The Registered Nurses Act*, the Investigation Committee will dismiss the complaint.